



King James's School Federation

POLICY STATEMENT

Home School Communications Policy

Policies last reviewed (date)	January 2024
Ratified by Governors (date)	January 2024
Next policy review due (date)	January 2026
Due for review by Governors (date)	January 2026
Staff Lead	

MISSION STATEMENT:

To help all stakeholders use the most effective lines of communication so that information is shared effectively, enabling students to be well supported, in all aspects of school life.

Significant revisions since the last review:

None (Policy first created January 2024)

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Section 1: Introduction and Aims

We believe that clear, open communication between the school and parents/carers has a positive impact on pupils' learning because it:

- Gives parents/carers the information they need to support their child's education.
- Helps the school improve, through feedback and consultation with parents/carers.
- Builds trust between home and school, which helps the school better support each child's educational and pastoral needs.

The aim of this policy is to promote clear and open communication by:

- Explaining how the school communicates with parents/carers.
- Setting clear standards and expectations for responding to communication from parents/carers.
- Helping parents/carers reach the member of school staff who is best placed to address their specific query or concern so they can get a response as quickly as possible.

In the following sections, we will use 'parents' to refer to both parents and carers.

Section 2: Roles and Responsibilities

1. Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- a) Ensuring that communications with parents are effective, timely and appropriate.
- b) Monitoring the implementation of this policy.
- c) Regularly reviewing this policy.

2. Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- a) Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy and the school's ICT and internet acceptable use policy.
- b) Working with other members of staff to make sure parents get timely information (if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves).
- c) Being open, honest, ethical and professional.
- d) Using jargon-free English that can be easily understood by all.

Staff will aim to respond to communication where the matter is non-urgent where a response is required within 48 hours (working days). In line with promoting staff wellbeing and helping our staff find a suitable work-life balance, staff may work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of normal school hours, but they are not expected to do so.

Some communications with school will not always require a response. For example, leaving a message to inform us of an on the day absence will not always require a call back from the school.

3. Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- a) Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance.
- b) Monitoring information through your child's planner and My Child at School (MCAS)
- c) Respond to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner.
- d) Checking all communications from the school.
- e) Ensuring that contact details are up to date with the school.
- f) Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times.

Any communication that is disrespectful, abusive or threatening and where behaviour is deemed threatening or intimidating will be treated in line with our parent code of conduct. The Governors reserve the right to use all steps necessary to ensure staff are not subjected to this type of behaviour. We appreciate at the time the situation may be stressful. However, we expect parents to engage in a professional conversation with staff.

Parents should not expect staff to respond to their communication outside of normal school hours or during school holidays.

Section 3: How We Communicate with Parents and Carers

The sections below explain how we keep parents up-to-date with their child's education and what is happening in school.

Parents should monitor all of the following regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

1. Email

Email is the preferred method of communication as teachers are likely to be teaching during the day and are unable to take phone calls.

We use email to keep parents informed about the following things:

- a) Upcoming school events
- b) School surveys or consultations
- c) Class activities or teacher requests
- d) Weekly Parent Bulletin
- e) Payments
- f) Educational trips and visits

2. Text messages

We will text parents about:

- a) Short-notice changes to the school day
- b) Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather).
- c) Reminders about scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days).
- d) Reminders about events such as school photographs, non-uniform days etc.
- e) Updates on attendance and punctuality

3. School calendar

Our school website includes a full school calendar for the academic year.

Where possible, we try to give parents at least 2 weeks' notice of any events or special occasions (including non-uniform days, special assemblies or visitors, or requests for pupils to bring in special items or materials).

4. Phone calls

Staff may make phone calls to parents for the following reasons:

- a) Praise and rewards
- b) Behaviour incidents
- c) Attendance and punctuality
- d) Feedback on academic progress
- e) Pastoral issues
- f) Safeguarding

Where staff contact home and are unable to reach a parent, they will leave a clear voicemail message highlighting who they are and the nature of the call. This prevents undue stress for parents and also supports the admin team when parents return missed calls.

To assist parents, contact details of teachers are on the website. Parents are advised to contact subject teachers or form tutors in the first instance.

5. Letters

We send the following letters home regularly by email attachment:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Parents Evenings and Pastoral Evenings
- Suspensions and exclusions (these letters are also posted to parents).

6. Newsletter

We send a weekly newsletter every Friday. This is available on our website and a link is sent to parents that are the priority 1 contact. The newsletter contains up-to-date news, photos and information about events happening in school and community notices.

7. Reports

Parents receive progress reports at the end of each Learning Cycle covering academic progress and attitude to learning. Additionally, students log their attendance in their planner during the first week of every half term. Parents are also notified of their child's attendance.

8. Meetings

- We hold one Pastoral Parents Evening per year group over the school year where parents can meet with their child's form tutor, the first point of contact for students each morning and the member of staff responsible for supporting them with both their progress and well-being at KJS. The meetings will

be held in school and parents will book through the Parents Evening booking system.

- We hold one Parents Evening per year group over the school year. During these meetings, parents can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum or schemes of work, their child's wellbeing, or any other area of concern. The meetings will be held online, through video conferencing and parents must book through the Parents Evening booking system.

The school may also contact parents to arrange supplementary meetings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, or wellbeing.

Parents of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

9. School Website

Key information about the school is posted on our website, including:

- a) School times and term dates
- b) Extra-curricular information
- c) Important events and announcements
- d) Curriculum information
- e) Important policies and procedures
- f) Important contact information
- g) The weekly newsletter
- h) Safeguarding information

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

10. Home-school communications app.

Parents are expected to download the Parentpay app. This is used predominantly for payments (canteen account, school trips, replacement ties etc).

We also ask that parents download MCAS to support receive important information regarding their child's achievement, behaviour, attitude to learning and attendance.

11. Social Media

Instagram is used to share information about particular groups, such as for Year group information or sports teams. Staff will not communicate directly with individual parents via social media or accept them as friends on their personal accounts.

Section 4: How Parents and Carers can communicate with the school

Parents should use the list in appendix 1 to identify the most appropriate person to contact about a query or issue, including the main school number and email address.

1. Online/Email

Parents should use the online 'Contact Us' form for non-emergency enquiries, ensuring they direct their enquiries appropriately. This is available on the school website. If parents are unsure who to contact, refer your enquiry to Admin.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 24 hours, and to respond in full (unless the case is complex) or

arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 48 hours working days.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the school.

2. Phone calls

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a non-urgent matter, they should email the main school email address and the relevant member of staff will contact them within 48 hours.

If the issue is urgent, parents should call the main school reception. Urgent issues might include things like:

- a) Family emergencies
- b) Safeguarding or welfare issues

3. Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the appropriate email address (see appendix 1) or call the school to book an appointment. A meeting may be required for the following reasons:

- a) To discuss any concerns they have about their child's learning
- b) Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing.

Parents should use appendix 1 to identify the most appropriate person to contact to arrange a meeting.

Teaching and support staff are required to carry out daily commitments before and after school. Parents should therefore not arrive at school and expect to see a member of staff immediately. We try to schedule all meetings within 5 working days of the request.

Section 5: Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school.

We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in English.

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request the following support:

- School announcements and communications translated into additional languages
- Interpreters for meetings or phone calls

We can make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the school office to discuss these.

Appendices:

1. School Contact List

Who should I contact?

If you have questions about any of the topics in the table below, or would like to speak to a member of staff:

- Email the school on admin@king-james.co.uk
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff, if known, in the subject line and your child's name
- We will forward your request on to the relevant member of staff
- Email is our preferred method of communication as our reception is extremely busy and most teachers are teaching and so cannot take calls. However, if you do need to speak to someone, please call school on 01423 866061. Please leave your name, child's name, member of staff you wish to speak to and nature of the call. The message will be passed to the member of staff who will reply to you.

Remember: check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there. Our website address is www.king-james.co.uk

We aim to respond to all emails and calls within 48 hours (working days).
The school's main reception hours are Monday to Friday 8.00am to 4.15pm.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO TO CONTACT
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Learning Manager for each year group Head of Department See our website for email contacts: www.King-james.co.uk
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Your child's Form Tutor or Pastoral Officer * *Contacts on our website www.King-james.co.uk
Payments	finance@king-james.co.uk
School trips	Trip Leader See details on the trip letter.
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's sickness absence, exceptional circumstance absence or medical/dental appointment, please use the Microsoft Form available on the school website: Report an Absence For any concerns surrounding your child's attendance, contact your child's form tutor.
Safeguarding	Contact our Designated Safeguarding Lead on dsl@king-james.co.uk

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO TO CONTACT
Bullying and behaviour	Your child's Form Tutor or Pastoral Officer* *Contacts on our website www.King-james.co.uk
School events/the school calendar	See the calendar on the school website www.King-james.co.uk
Special educational needs (SEN)	SENCO senco@king-james.co.uk
After-school clubs	Visit the school website
Governing board	Contact the Chair of Governors via The Clerk to the Governors Clerk to Governors

2. Complaints

We would always strive to resolve any issues by talking through the matter with parents/carers. In the event that parents/carers are still not satisfied with the outcome we would look to arrange a more formal meeting. If the matter has still not been resolved, we would refer parents/carers to the school's Complaints policy which can be found by clicking on the link below.

[King James's Complaints Procedure](#)